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A LECTURE,

BY

THE LATE HON. JAMES M'DOWELL,

OF LEXINGTON, VA.,

AND

AN ADDRESS,

BY

THE LATE REV. A. ALEXANDER, D.D.

PHILADELPHIA:

FOR SALE BY JOSEPH M. WILSON,

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P R E F A C E.

PHILADELPHIA, November, 1851.

WE deem any extended preface to Gov. McDowell's Lecture unnecessary; but, as an appropriate introduction, the following beautiful and interesting letter is appended, by permission.

G. OWEN.

LEXINGTON, VIRGINIA.

September 30th, 1851.

MY DEAR SIR,

The accompanying speech of my father I have copied for you, since his death, with the aid of his notes, from a much blurred and blotted manuscript found amongst his papers.

It is, I believe, a complete speech, though probably not, in all its parts, the *very* one which you heard him deliver last spring in Philadelphia; for he was accustomed, when warmed by his subject, to cast off the restraint of a written form, and give himself up to the inspiration of the moment, and at such times, from his aroused imagination and enkindled enthusiasm, he would throw out, in illustration of his topic, many a glowing and striking picture, which he could never recover and reproduce afterwards, when, in the calmness and solitude of his own room, he was preparing that same address for publication.

Some such omissions you will remark here. One especially I regret to lose—his impassioned tribute to Kossuth—"that wonderful martyr to *our* principles, who, standing apart from all other men, and distinguished from the whole mass of his fellow-mortals, by the imposing and sublime isolation of his virtues and his fate, has been permitted, to the shame of Christendom, to depend upon a Mussulman prince for a refuge and a shelter."

But these were embellishments of his topic,—not the topic itself, and though I am sorry to lose them, yet I am glad to find that nothing is lost that was necessary to the strength of the argument, and the main design of the speech. Therefore, I send it to you as it is, and hope that in this, his last effort for the good of his country, he may still, though his voice is now hushed for ever, be able to speak a word in support of that glorious Union, whose interests and whose welfare, shared with us, his children, the deepest anxieties and the warmest affections of his heart.

I am,

Very truly yours,

SALLY C. P. M'DOWELL.

REV. GRIFFITH OWEN, Philadelphia.

LECTURE

DELIVERED BY JAMES M'DOWELL, OF LEXINGTON, VA., IN PHILADELPHIA, ON
BEHALF OF THE SOUTHWARK CHURCH IN THAT CITY, UNDER THE CHARGE OF
THE REV. GRIFFITH OWEN.

THE high subject, fellow-citizens, upon which I have the privilege and the honour to address you to-night, is that of our political or federal Union. Not the whole subject, indeed; for that, as compounded of its past and its present—its seminal and its developed history, its colonial, revolutionary, and constitutional epochs, and its confederate relation to all that is most hopeful in the principles of human government, and the regulated progress of human liberty, is too immeasurable by far, for the elucidation or the reach of an hour's discourse.

In fact every part of this grand subject is a study; every part of it is rich with spoils to the philosopher and the patriot: and no American, certainly no true-hearted and reflecting American, can ever examine it through, and ponder upon that multitude of scattered influences and events, each one of which was made, in its place, to contribute a special and almost mysterious share in the ultimate formation of the Union, without entertaining a loftier estimate of its value, and a devouter homage to that Providence, which casting his lot in it, made him thereby both a partaker and a dispenser of its blessings.

If you would see this subject in some of its clearest and best lights, you must look to the sources from which our Union has proceeded. You must go back—far back—of the written covenants in which its governing authority is contained, and there, behind them, in the noble stocks from which our people have descended, and in the trying schools in which their national mind has been trained, you will see the strong foundations upon which their principles and character have been laid, and trace the origin and the growth of that American spirit in which at last the living, thinking, active power of the Union consists.

Without going, however, into these matters, because too extended for the purposes of this occasion, it is impossible to advert to our original family stock, and consider the first peopling of this Continent by the nations of Europe, without perceiving how wonderful was its connexion with some of the most thrilling eras of their history, and how beneficent and potential was its influence upon our own.

There stands upon one side of the great deep these populous and powerful nations, just awaking from the sleep, and staggering under the wrongs of centuries :—and here, upon this side, stands our new and lovely world, rejoicing in her liberty, smiling in abundance, and calling out from these ends of creation, upon all who had wants to supply, or wrongs to fear, or dangers to avoid, or energies to exert, to come and find here a habitation and a home beyond the reach of despotism and of harm, far, far away under the setting sun. And they did come,—throng after throng of them, panting for this very deliverance, and pouring themselves out for long, long years, a living and swelling tide upon our shores.

Under the stimulation of such a movement as this, it must needs happen that crowds of colonists would flock hither, who were, not only the most unlike, and, antecedently to their emigration, the most hostile to one another, but that from all quarters the most vigorous, self-relying, and resolute of those who desired the change would be the first to make it. Hence the materials which first entered into the formation of our country were drawn from all parts of civilized Europe; and those materials only were the most surely drawn which were the best fitted by nature, by sufferings, and by character, for the work of that unparalleled empire to which it was their destiny to be devoted. Hence, too, it came to pass that our people were not one people, built up as fragments that were cast forth from the surfeits and the plethora of another. Nor were they sent out by lot, or choice, or necessity, as the ancients sometimes sent out theirs to be formed into auxiliary or dependent communities, for the relief or aggrandizement of the parent State. But ours were a people gathered from all other people; and "so gathered that the evils of each might be corrected by opposing good, and the good of all strengthened by the common will." They came from every land, and nation, and tongue, of the most enlightened part of the globe, bringing with them their tributary offering, and preparing themselves as a sort of community of nations under the severe ordeal of their new condition, for the new structure into which their united society was about to be cast.

They brought with them also the sentiments and the purity, both political and religious, which drove them into our land from the controversies and troubles

of their own, and yielding to the guidance and instruction of these, they impressed upon the States which they founded here, in many vital things, the precisely opposite lineaments of those they had left.

From the last quarter of the 16th to the middle of the 18th century, it may be affirmed, with almost literal exactness, that the controversies and struggles of Europe were the copious and constant fountain of growth, and strength, and prosperity to us. During that one hundred and fifty years, what great events crowded upon one another throughout the States of that Continent! What ceaseless and sanguinary wars! What rivalry and strife of mind! What trying of all things by new and fiery processes, and yet, at the same time, what grand progression of the human race!

Throughout the whole of this long period, and in the very midst of its most thrilling events, it was so ordered by Providence, that every land in Europe alike from its victories and its defeats, should send forth its colonists here. It mattered not, in their bloody conflicts with one another, whose the triumph or whose the fall, the gain was still to us. If the cruel and perfidious Stuarts ruled, Scotland and England and Ireland in turn gave us crowds of their best, who forsook everything at home for the sake of their religion and their liberty here. And if the glorious Commonwealth spread its banner over Britain, a misguided but heroic legality drove the defenders of the throne into exile amongst our American forests. And here, upon these shores, the regicide who had taken the life of King Charles, and the Cavalier who had plotted against that of Cromwell, sat down side by side in the same boundless wilderness, and freely and ardently

united their hands and their counsels in building up within it a common country for the protection of themselves and their children. So, too, did a kindred people—kindred in the motives and feelings which controlled them,—come forth from Denmark, and Sweden, and Spain, and Italy, and the United Provinces. Even France, renowned, heroic, and beautiful France, gave to us and to mankind a handful of her wisest and her best,—a handful “of whom the world was not worthy;” who, without stain, without reproach, were crushed to the dust—were delivered up to the rack, the scourge, the dungeon, the stake,—as if accursed of Heaven, until, at last, a weeping and bleeding remnant of them found their way to our land, and poured into our veins the rich stream of Huguenot blood.

Here, in these various colonists, we see the early instruments of that most happy of all systems of civil rule, which it is our blessing this day to enjoy. Such men, so situated as these, could not fail to be profoundly impressed with the grandeur of their new position. To them—“old things had passed away”—the ancient world was dead, and they were launched into a new existence, where their own destiny and that of indefinite ages, waited to be fashioned by their hands. Thoroughly alive to all the great questions which had convulsed the world, actors themselves in the vast movements under which States had been rent, victims of every form of ancient and inherited evil, or victors in every strife which the young regenerate waged against the dying Europe, they stood, after their arrival here, in solitary but sublime and inspiring isolation upon the margin of a second world and a new futurity. Hence it was, no doubt, that the

great master principles of the new order of things, which they established for their new situation, were laid simply, deeply, broadly, with the least possible commixture of ancient error, and the largest possible one of reason, justice, equality, and common sense. As the necessary consequence of this, behold in every community amongst us, no matter what the nation or people it principally sprang from, and no matter in what clime of our broad empire it lies—behold in them all but one model,—but one spirit,—but one fabric,—one precious, majestic fabric of man for man.

Whilst, however, the training of our colonial forefathers led inevitably to that new order of government which they established; so too did the boundless expansion of the field to which they had come, lead just as inevitably to the distinct and separate communities into which they were formed from the first. And here, in these two things—first, in the simple nature and clear equity of our foundation principles; and, secondly, in the creation of many separate States upon a common basis—we have briefly comprehended the primary and powerful elements of whatever is most peculiar, secure, energetic, expansive, and valuable in our system.

On the one hand, we find that this internal structure, resting upon a basis of perfect equity, has called for devotion to principle, and has been enabled to maintain, from the beginning, one unwavering and fixed constancy to the great ideas upon which the whole system reposes, that you will look in vain for the unworthy compromise, or the wilful violation, or the purposed abandonment, of any of the essential principles for which our forefathers emigrated here, or

upon which any State has been formed, or which has guided from the first the faith and spirit of our people.

On the other hand, every outward circumstance in the state of the country, and that of the emigrants to it, having demanded at the outset, as indispensable, the formation of separate and distinct communities,—the construction here of one undivided, supreme, and central power, embodying the whole, or controlling the whole, was the very opposite of all the possibilities of our case; nor was the construction of even a national one possible either, except to a very limited extent, and upon fixed points. How that national one came eventually to be formed,—how the numerous States that sprung up into separate existence, under the necessities of their colonial settlement, were drawn at last into one sovereign confederacy with each other, is an inquiry altogether important to the subject before us, but too recently and too elaborately reviewed upon this spot to be investigated now.

There are three periods of our history within which the great features of our political system have been the most distinctly and permanently marked.

The first, beginning with the discovery and the settlement of the country, and extending on to 1733, when Georgia, the last of the colonies, was planted.

The second, including the colonial and revolutionary history, and ending with the old confederation, in 1789.

The third, beginning at that time and embracing our constitutional history, together with the events of this, our own day.

Passing by the first two periods which have been

mentioned, without further remark, let us consider for awhile our constitutional Union as we have it; its general structure; its excellence; its perfect adaptedness to every variety of State law, and State institution; its tried adequacy for the highest ends of good government, and thence, by legitimate deduction, let us infer the measure and the sacredness of that resulting duty, which rests upon every American citizen to cherish, to vindicate, and uphold it.

There is no remark upon the Union more obvious, or more meet to be remembered, in its administration, than this: that whilst, upon the one hand, it is not a mere confederacy or association upon agreed terms, of an indefinite number of political communities; so, upon the other, it is not a simple body or nation, whose supreme and governing power is exercised by a mere majority of its actual numbers. It is something between these states or conditions of political being, and is wisely compounded of them both; it is an aggregation, for certain great purposes of government, of all the people and all the States into one; and, for other great purposes, again, a severance of them all into separate and self-governed, but united parts. Hence the definition that was given of it by Mr. Madison, in one of the numbers of the *Federalist*, that it was partly national and partly federal, in its construction and its powers.

Exclusively federal during the Revolutionary war, it was then proven, that, however well such a form of government might answer for the country under the pressure of danger, and during the patriotic fervor which that danger would call into life, yet, that it was utterly inadequate to the requirements and the

wants of our every-day and permanent system. Thus warned and certified of its defects, our provident forefathers of that day, both statesmen and people, determined to change it, and to provide another of a kindred kind, from which, at least, all the known defects of the first should be carefully pruned away. Our present constitution is that other,—a constitution in which the basis of the old one is retained, but retained with an adjustment and distribution of powers, between the General and State governments, so changed as to form a system, in many vital respects, entirely new—one which has no precedent in political example, and which, judged of by its fruits, has no parallel in political value. As the retention of distinct and separate communities has been formed an absolute and indispensable preliminary in all hypotheses and schemes of government, with us, the great problem was, how to preserve that preliminary, and, at the same time, provide a government which should be perfectly capable, when need be, of exerting, without hindrance, delay, or confusion of any kind, the power of all for the purposes of all. This was the great problem in the case; and contradictory and paradoxical even as it seemed to be, it was fully and wisely accomplished, the whole parts of the government scheme being so arranged as to place all local interests under the management of the local governments, and all the general ones—all that enters into the common tranquillity, and the common defence,—under the administration of the federal head. Each particular State was allowed to retain, with specified and limited exceptions, the complete right of a separate and sovereign republic, to govern everything

within its own territory, according to the judgment and will of its own people. But, at the same time, each State was put into union with all the rest, as mutual and equal parties to one grand compact, and made to co-operate, within fixed and definite limits, in such matters of mutual and general concernment as the common head should adjudge to be necessary and proper.

In other words, our States are associated with one another in a government by which each is left to take care of its own homestead, and all are consolidated under one will, and into one vast aggregate of efficiency and power, for the joint purposes of peace, prosperity, and defence. Several, separate, and self-directed, upon matters of special interest, they have yet the front, the force, the revenues, the numbers, the majestic might of embodied nations, when acting for a common end. As individuals when entering into society divest themselves of a portion of their natural liberty, with a view to the better use and protection of the whole of it, so the States, when entering into the Union, gave up a portion of their State supremacy, or political liberty, upon the very same principle, and for the very same purpose.

Rhode Island and Delaware, when they became members of the Union, conceded to it a part of their sovereignty. Not only is the conceded part employed, with the aid of their own counsel, for their own good ; but the concession gives, in effect, their petty area an empire's bounds, and puts their petty power under the strong wing of many millions. Their drop of contribution is returned to them in an ocean of pay.

One of the first and happiest effects of this govern-

mental union of contiguous States, was the extinguishing, at the outset, all the temptations and all the possibilities even of conflict and of war with one another (temptations and possibilities especially incident to their neighbouring situation); it established over them, instead, a law of mutual kindness and interest, and made the faculties and advantages of each the faculties and advantages of all.

But this idea has been so happily and forcibly set forth in a speech which was made by Mr. James Wilson, a wise and eminent statesman of your own, in the Pennsylvania Convention which assembled in 1787, to deliberate and decide upon the ratification or rejection of the federal constitution, which was then just formed. Mr. Wilson advocated the ratification with great zeal; and, in an argument in the speech referred to, upon facts and upon general principles of government, so strong, so satisfactory, so comprehensive of all the points of the case, that it is not only a rich depository for the constitutional student, but a sound, judicious, and admirable tract for our own times. Adverting to the circumstances in the situation of this country which rendered a federal government, in his opinion, the only suitable one for it, he says: "The United States may adopt any one of four different systems. They may become consolidated into one government, in which the separate existence of the States shall be entirely absorbed. They may reject any plan of union or association, and act as separate and unconnected States. They may form two or more confederacies. They may unite in one federal republic. Which of these systems ought to have been proposed by the Convention? To support with vigour

a single government over the whole extent of the United States, would demand a system of the most unqualified and unremitted despotism. Such a number of separate States, unconnected and disunited in government, would be at one time the prey of foreign force, foreign influence, and foreign intrigue; at another, the victim of mutual rage, rancour, and revenge. Neither of these systems found advocates in the late Convention. I presume they will not find advocates in this. Would it be proper to divide the United States into two or more confederacies? It will not be unadvisable to take a more minute survey of this subject. Some aspects under which it may be viewed, are far from being, at first sight, uninviting. Two or more confederacies would be each more manageable and more compact, than a single one extending over the same territory. By dividing the United States into two or more confederacies, the great collision of interests, apparently or really different and contrary, would be broken, and in great measure disappear in the several parts. But these advantages, which are discovered from certain points of view, are greatly overbalanced by inconveniences that will appear on a more accurate examination. Animosities and perhaps wars would arise upon assigning the extent, the limits, and the rights of the different confederacies. The expenses of governing would be multiplied by the number of federal governments. The danger resulting from foreign influence and mutual dissension would not, perhaps, be less great and alarming, in the instance of different confederacies, than in that of different though more numerous unassociated States.

“These observations, and more that might be made,

will be sufficient to evince that a division of the United States into a number of separate confederacies, would probably be an unsatisfactory and unsuccessful experiment. The remaining system which the American States may adopt, is a union of them under one confederate republic. It will not require much time or argument to show that this is the most eligible that can be proposed," &c.

Apart from the advantages of preserving the peace and preventing the differences that would result from using all their faculties to build up and to strengthen, or to pull down and destroy one another;—apart from this, so comprehensive often of the whole story even of national existence, there are others only less obvious and less potential than it is. And amongst these the most striking, perhaps, is the *expansibility* of the system in its inherent power of easy and indefinite enlargement.

With our home interests under the control of our home government, and our foreign and internal tranquillity under that of the federal head, happily for us—happily for mankind, all areas suit it alike. It is equally fit for the Cantons of Switzerland and the Continent of America.

It matters nothing as to the States it unites, how they may differ or how agree, in geographical and in moral qualities; in their physical products, or in the pursuits, habits, tastes, sympathies, and social structure of their population. They may differ in all things, they may agree in all things,—it is just the same as respects the value and the fitness of the system for their use. The reason of this is obvious and easily understood. It is, that all the identities of

feeling and interest, all the homogeneousness which the safe administration of a popular government undoubtedly requires, are provided for—abundantly provided for and secured in the different States, whose special province it is to act upon the thousand-fold relations and rights of individual man, and need not, therefore, be required of the States politically as necessary conditions of their union with one another.

Indeed, contrarieties of condition amongst the States, so far from being evils to deprecate, are sometimes advantages to seek for.

“I know,” says Mr. Jefferson, in his presidential Inaugural of 1805, “that the acquisition of Louisiana has been disapproved by some from a candid apprehension that the enlargement of our territory would endanger its union. But who can limit the extent to which the federative principle may operate effectively? The larger our association the less will it be shaken by local passions.” This is philosophically and practically true. Hence, under the beneficence of our system, the extension which would overwhelm despotisms and simple republics alike, is only an added element of safety and of strength to us.

Take it in its whole circle of capability and of action, and it is demonstrable that of all forms of government it is the most difficult to be abused to ends of violence, and the most easily to be restored to its proper course. It is demonstrable, too, that no other form can do as much for civilization and knowledge, for no other one possesses such a multitude of separate centres, each one of which gives increased activity to everything within itself, hereby adding to the sum of all human movements, and each one affording in times

of trial and of darkness a refuge and a home against the crimes, the follies, or the disasters of all the rest. Such a system, from its whole nature and composition, possesses the utmost possible means of resisting evil influences from within, both because it is most dependent on the general will, and therefore most dear to the common heart; and because its capacity for self-adjustment is most perfect, and its centres of influence and security most multiplied,—insomuch, indeed, as to require that a positive majority of the whole, and a concurrent one of every part, should be utterly corrupted and lost to the vital principles of the system, before it could be destroyed in all of its strongholds,—and as long as a solitary one of them remained, that one might redeem all the rest. Still, like all human good, this system is not entirely free from incidental defeat. Invaluable and unequalled as described in the great and vital qualities of a just and safe and powerful government, it is yet not to be denied that the very structure which secures these results, itself, does something to impair the popular cordialities of popular intercourse; to put the States upon a footing of separation and severalty in their social as in their political connexions; and, by making each one of them the centre to itself of all the stronger and more exclusive interests and affections, to promote the growth of a divided fellowship, to weaken the sense of a common unity, and thereby to foster if not to fix amongst the people of the States whose laws and institutions materially differ, a spirit of mutual prejudice and exception.

No observer of our social affinities can fail to have perceived how frequent and marked, in private life,

are the traces of this spirit; nor are we without occasional and exciting exhibitions of it, also, in public affairs. That the great sectional controversy of the last two or three years, which has lain, until recently, like an incubus, upon Congress and the country, has owed both its bitterness and its duration, in some degree, at least, to this very spirit, cannot, I think, be reasonably questioned. How else could we find all the slaveholding communities blended together upon one side, upon the moral as well as the political aspects of that controversy, and all the non-slaveholding communities, just as thoroughly united, and just to the same extent, on the other? How could this be, but that each of these parties had been trained and educated to a sentiment upon the case between them, which was suited to its own separate and particular, but opposite, condition of society and of life?

Still, however, there is nothing necessarily evil in this territorial or State spirit, easily as it may be aroused, and ruinous of the public peace as it may be made to be. It is the fountain of State loyalty, and State amelioration. It is, in that, by necessary consequence, the fountain also of national good. It is, yet further, the source of good, when it operates to inculcate and to maintain among the States an intercourse and sentiment of mutual toleration and respect.

As the recent exhibition of this spirit, in the contest referred to, was by far the fiercest and most alarming to the continued repose and security of the Republic which we have ever had, let us devote a passing inquiry into that famous *Institution*, about which that contest was enkindled, and see, if we can, whether there is anything in it, or in the laws that

govern it, that should aggrieve communities which, like yours, have disowned and renounced it, or which should diminish, in any sort, the fervour of their attachment to that Union within whose bosom and under whose constitutional wing it is sheltered.

And first and mainly as to your responsibility—what is it?

Upon this point, it is, perhaps, quite enough to say, that as every State, under our system of government, is the exclusive and sovereign disposer within its own limits, of all the local rights and establishments of its people, those of them only which sanction the institution of slavery are responsible for it; whilst the rest, that have not sanctioned it, are no more responsible for it, amongst those who have, than they are for the regulation of the poor-rates or of the Church property in the Kingdom of Great Britain.

Different nations are not a particle more independent of one another, in the control of matters within their own proper limits, than are the different States of this Union, in the control of theirs. This is a great first principle in our government, to which all else is made to conform. As you are wholly irresponsible, then, under your fundamental law, for this institution in the States where it exists, your only responsibility for it lies outside of the States, and consists, exclusively, in your connexion with a government which allows it in any of its parts. The whole head and front of your offending, upon this subject, “hath just this extent and no more:” that you are co-parties in a system of government with others who possess, and who, in some cases, exercise under that system the right to establish that institution within

their own domain. You discard and reject it for yourselves, but you have a co-membership in a government which intermediately maintains it, and therefore, as it is argued, you sanction what it sanctions. In other words, your co-membership in the same constitution with slaveholding States, is the sum total of your culpability in this matter. But to make this a real offence, and not an ideal one, it must be shown that this co-membership is a part of the means by which the slavery of the slaveholding States was established and is kept up. If this cannot be shown, then it cannot be proven that you have contributed anything to slavery; and if nothing, you have of course nothing to answer for. That slavery would have existed in the Southern States, whether you had been connected with them or not, no one can question. Your association with those States in the federal government has, doubtless, added to their stability and strength, and in that way you have added something to the strength of this institution. Admit it,—admit it to the utmost,—what then? Looking at the matter thus, it is a matter of mere conjecture, whether your constitutional co-partnership with us has ever had any actual effect upon this institution. Assume it, however, to have had—assume it to have been one of the positive means of its continuance and its spread—what is your culpability then? what the moral measure of your offence? Did no consideration of national safety,—did no consideration of national self-preservation enter into your view and control you in the formation of your constitutional compact with the South? Had you no well-grounded apprehensions of extinction by a foreign power, or by local conflicts at home, unless

secured and protected against it by this compact? If you had, then it was your duty to enter it. But go a step further,—go to the last proposition in the case. Admit that there was no such duty,—no such justification as that assumed; there is, at least, and at last, a principle of consideration for equivalents, upon which to estimate and try it. Take your guilt for all the slavery which the Constitution, of which you are a co-member, has authorized outside of the States, and inside of them, and weigh it against the civil, religious, and personal liberty which it has also authorized outside and in,—against the good, in a thousand shapes, which the same Constitution is doing, and will continue to do, for universal man; take these things and weigh them against one another, and then say, as rational persons, whether there is any guilt in this partnership that you regret,—whether you repent yourselves for your share in the great charter which is impelling free thought and free action amongst all people, giving a new soul to the world that we live in.

There is a fanaticism which would hold these weights to be equal; or rather, which would hold the guilt to exceed the grace and grandeur of the recompense; but it is kindred with the madness which would complain of the polar star, because of the trifling oscillations on his centre, or would tear the sun himself from the sky, because of the spots upon his disk.

But beyond this covenant connexion with slaveholding States, you have an historical relation with this subject of slavery, which, if it goes no farther, goes far enough, at least, to bespeak the exercise of your patience and your charity towards us. You, too, of Pennsylvania, have been slaveholders in your day, as

well as we of Virginia and the South. Every one of the original thirteen States, indeed, at some stage of their career, have given the sanction of law to the very same slavery which now exists at the South; and those of them who have taken that sanction away, and expunged the system from their midst, have done so through the influence of that enlightened interest, to whose quick and effective law it is safest and wisest to commit it everywhere else. And why not? What good reason is there, founded upon considerations of humanity, in the abstract or the concrete, why this system of slavery, regarded as of civil rights, should not, like every other one pertaining to property, be subjected to the control of private interest? Under this great first law of property regulation, itself underlying and supporting the vast transactions of the civilized world, this institution has disappeared from amongst you, and may, in due season, especially when coupled with other reasons, disappear from large portions of the South also. Notwithstanding the bounties, both of land and money, with which it was the policy of some of your Northern legislatures, at an early day, to encourage the direct importation of the slave from Africa, and notwithstanding the mercantile activity, and the high profits upon a large scale, which this importation is believed to have excited and rewarded, still the physical nature of the slave was such that he withered away under the rigors of your Northern climate, and soon dropped from your hands, a profitless and troublesome possession. Had all the facts in this case been reversed,—had the soil been propitious to his labours, the climate to his health,—had the sun and

the air been such as to crush the spirit and the energies of his master for outdoor employment, but to buoy up and invigorate his,—had he, of all men in the world, been the identical one who was the best fitted by his constitution and colour, to reap from your field of toil the largest possible profits of human labour, at the least possible expense of human happiness or life,—and had he, as a consequence of this double advantage, been able to pour yearly and increasing millions into the hands of communities that enslaved him; and, besides all this, had he become so perfectly wrought up into the texture and framework of society about him, its habits, sentiments, dependencies, and affections, that it was impossible to sever him from it without a shock,—had all this, instead of the contrary, been his situation, it is not to be doubted that the process of his emancipation would have been slower, and the spurning of the whole system from human sympathy and endurance would have been less clamorous, and impassioned, and indignant, than it has been, and is.

Under a change of circumstances, indeed, in this matter so total, it is not altogether presumptuous or irreverent to imagine that you, even you, who are warmed with the blood of the William Penns, and Roger Williams and Cotton Mathers, would, at this very day, be standing in the footsteps of the South, thinking her thoughts, and feeling her feelings, and vindicating her equities, in the national strifes which this subject has provoked.

Whatever the motives which prevailed in Northern emancipation, it is not to be forgotten that the South was a powerful auxiliary in having it accomplished.

She was always ready to receive the slaves which their Northern owners found it profitable or convenient to dispose of; thus affording, at that day, through her territories, the relief, in this respect, which at this day has been denied so strenuously to herself, and thus stimulating emancipation in the North by making it a source of trade and direct pecuniary gain.

Your incumbering and your profitless thousands of slaves were thrown off upon her, and the vast sums of money which were given in exchange, taken back to your own homesteads, have long since been incorporated with that capital whose wonder-working progress and achievements have attracted to your enterprise the homage of universal admiration, and filled your whole land with monuments of science and art, and philanthropy and religion.

Were it possible to follow the fortunes of a dollar upon its adventurous pathway through the world, it is not to be doubted that thousands of those into which these slaves were exchanged, and which are now multiplied into thousands more, are "going ahead" at this hour, furnishing forth food and raiment and personal consequence to many a citizen, who, as he communes with himself in the solitude of his own chamber, or in the busy thoroughfares of men, thanks Heaven that he has nothing to do with the guilt of human bondage, and that his whole nature revolts at any kindred relationship with the robber-man, who can smooth his pillow, or satisfy his wants, or enjoy his life, upon the soiled and sorrowing proceeds of so hateful a system. Be it as it may, a portion of its original materials came from yourselves; and however remote, and however slight, comparatively, your ancestral association with

it, it was yet enough in its inceptive state, then and now, to shut the mouth of imperial rebuke, and draw forth, what is so much wiser, gentler, and better, in its stead, the words and the acts of moderation, kindness, and forbearance.

Recurring to the humanity which is involved in this subject, it is pertinent to say, that since the introduction of the slave into the South, taking his whole case into view, humanity has been immensely the gainer. When we received him there, he was a perfect barbarian, with only rationality enough to be employed in the very simplest and lowest of human labours. We now present him back to the world with his barbarism all extinguished and gone, himself highly enlightened, in thousands of individual cases, and thoroughly imbued, as a race, with the tastes, the habits, the wants, the improbabilities of civilized man. Meanwhile, he has been kept in a degree of physical comfort, exceeding that of any peasant labourer, whose condition we know anything about, in the whole world. There is no such thing as a *pauper slave*, and never can be. Whoever else may writhe and groan under want or debt, *the slave* feels neither, and fears neither: he works on, sleeps on, whistles on (for he is the merriest of all mortals), just as if such things had no existence amongst the troubles of life.

Not only, however, is he among the most comfortable of the labourers of mankind, if not, pre-eminently the most so, in this external and physical condition, he is still more—he is in the midst of that condition the producer of more that supplies the wants, and nourishes the industry, and adds to the resources, and

energies, and enjoyments of the whole world, than any other producing class of equal numbers that is in it.

Take the single article of cotton, which is raised by him, and oftentimes under circumstances making the production impossible to any one of a different colour,—take the sixty-five or seventy millions of dollars worth of this article, coming from his hands, and follow it up through all its changes of form and place, from its first gathering in the field, to the spot of its final consumption; look at the whole system of manufacturing, commercial, and mechanical pursuits which it puts into motion at every step of its progress,—look at these again, as divided, diversified, and prospered,—see the multitudes, of all sorts, that they absorb in their operations, and to whom they extend occupation and subsistence;—see all this, and, if it be possible for arithmetic to sum up and to express in figures the amount which is thus added to the wealth of the world, yet it is impossible to go to the hearth and trace out the mental and moral effects of these multiplied, and replenished, and prospered pursuits upon the heart and life of the whole masses they employ; so it is impossible, in these best results, for any figures ever to show how immeasurably the slave has added by this one product of his labour to the great aggregate of civilization and of human happiness.

Thus have we changed the barbarian whom we got, into civilized, oftentimes into Christianized man; and, besides that, we have made him an instrument of peculiar and prominent value in upholding and extending the civilization and the progress of others.

But there is another phase of still livelier interest in which he stands out to the eye of the world:—it is

that in which he appears, not as the passive creature, submitting himself and his destiny, unthinkingly and unquestioningly, to the absolute will of another, but that, in which he becomes the intelligent and independent actor for himself.

Some thirty years ago, a handful of liberated slaves were formed into a colony on the shores of Western Africa, where, self-directed and self-sustained almost entirely, they have risen up into a strong and independent community, having established, by their own act, a system of government and of civil rights upon the general model of our own, and thus prepared themselves, at the start, for the enjoyment and the spread of the largest liberty, personal, spiritual, and civil, in the dark and native land of the cannibal and the out-cast.

But yesterday, they, or their immediate progenitors, were a submissive group of Southern slaves—now, the head of a republic, more happy, more prosperous in its whole career, more stable in its structure, more auspicious of extended good, than any which enlightened and venerable Europe has yet been able to evoke from her learning and her conflicts.

Here, upon one side is Liberia, made up of American slaves, all but indiscriminately gotten together, sitting peacefully and serenely in the enjoyment of their regulated liberty, with their congresses, and churches, and school-houses, and independent press;—with all the awakening, energizing, and conservative means by which a free people, and a just and rational government, reciprocally cherish and support one another.

There, on the other side, is France, heroic France, pursuing for generations the idea of free and popular

government, with all the eagerness and intensity of madness itself—and pursuing it through scenes of convulsion and massacre, yet, ever crossed, cheated, despoiled of her aims, she has accomplished, as yet, nothing half so valuable. And there, too, is Rome, the mother of civilization, trembling under the liberty-impulse of the age, and the high inspiration of her immortal renown; yet, as in France, she too, with all her spirit, and blood, and battles, has accomplished nothing so good. With her Vatican of four hundred thousand volumes, and her seventy thousand marble statues, the disinterred remains of her illustrious age, she yet wants the bold and free *press* to give vitality and effect to the liberty-sentiment of her people, and to drive forward her struggles with the entire power of the popular heart. And, herein, this hierarchate of a thousand years—this eternal city of the Pontiffs and the Casars, is incomparably below the slave-born, the slave-bred, negro-conducted commonwealth of Liberia!

In all these developments of the progress of slavery, we are furnished with results highly favourable, even upon a large scale, to personal and general humanity; results, too, which have arisen out of the natural and regular working of the system, and which have not been produced by any artificial means adroitly interposed to create them. They have, in fact, fallen out by the wayside, as so many unanticipated consequences of a system which was established entirely as one of labour, and which has, regularly and rigidly, been kept up for that purpose, and for no other whatsoever.

Considering this institution of slavery in the light of these various developments, it is easy to see that it

not only carries along with it the mere tendencies or aptitudes for incidental alleviation, but strong and persuasive elements, which are quietly, certainly, mysteriously working on to some final issue, which it is not for man with rash and pragmatistical hand to precipitate, but to wait for,—and to wait with reverence and submission. And amongst the elements so pointing to this final issue, is the very one, in my judgment, which is the most habitually dwelt upon and deprecated as filling up the whole system with its difficulties and its dangers—namely, *the colour* of its subjects. Had it not been for this unhappy colour, it has been said a million of times, there would either never have been such a thing as American slavery, or, if there had, it would have been blotted out long ago. But for this natural and irremovable impediment, the master and the vassal race would have mingled with each other as they have done in all other nations where the same relation existed, and slavery here, as there, would have been sunk and lost without shock, disquiet, or embarrassment of any kind, but gently, quietly, acceptably, happily, by the voluntary union of the parties with one another. This is true—undoubtedly true. But this truth, thought out to its proper results, not only furnishes nothing to lament in the colour of the slave, but much to admire; and goes to impress the whole system, through that very circumstance, with an extraordinary character of hopefulness and interest.

The colour so objected to, has always operated as a sort of prohibitory law to prevent the amalgamation of the races, and thereby to preserve to the African amongst us, the same physical characteristics which

were given to him at the home and in the land of his birth. The universality and long continuance of this effect, is itself pretty strong presumptive proof that the separation of the races was a thing designed by the colour, and so designed for the ulterior purpose, as we may suppose, of preserving for some other end the physical peculiarities of the African upon this continent precisely as they belonged to him upon his own. But if the absolute separation of the races was a real design in this case, how imperfectly and feebly protected would it seem to be under the mere caprices and instincts of taste which attach to diversities of colour. Accordingly, we find that it is, in fact, committed to no such slight and conquerable guardianship as this; but that it is put under the iron hand of a physical law.

The offspring of the two races is a hybrid—a monster in animal economy,—and though its progression is not restricted, like that of some of the inferior animals, to the first generation, it is, nevertheless, so arrested by the most crushing calamities that flesh is heir to,—by lunacy, idiocy, blindness, deafness, and dumbness, that, unremoved, it dies out in five or six generations, and can never become the sound, parental stock of a self-continuing population.

Here, then, we have always before us the extraordinary spectacle of one race of mankind living in the midst of another, and so living for now more than two hundred years, and yet, prevented by the force of natural laws from incorporating with it, and thereby prevented, also, from disappearing and from impairing or losing any one of its native and original characteristics. The final cause of this—the reason why it is

so, we must look for in that primitive curse, by which Canaan was doomed to be "a servant of servants unto his brethren;" or we must find it, where it most likely exists, in some high and renovating function which the American slave is destined to fulfil in the redemption of the continent and people from which he originally came.

Along with this physical immutability as a race amongst us, the slave associates another peculiarity hardly less significant, or less declaratory of the purpose of his presence here,—and that is, his almost incredible aptitude for acquiring, as if by intuition, the tastes, the social habits, the mechanical arts, and the household intelligence of his master. Go to Dahomy, catch up one of its wild children, bring him here with all his barbarism and his hated notions sticking to him; harness him up to your labours; shut him out from every item of knowledge but what he can pick up from his yoke-fellows in the toil of the field;—do this, and yet, in a few years, his whole savagism will drop away from him clean and smooth, as if by magic, and he will stand forth a civilized man. But if this is not universally true of the imported native African himself, it is absolutely and universally so of his American child of the first generation. How vast the difference, in this respect, between him and our own red men, who, at this day, are almost as wild as if ages of national and missionary effort had not been made to improve him. How vast the difference, too, between what he is here and in his own country: there, amongst the most incapable of all savages for self-elevation; but here, wonderfully capable of lifting himself up by the help and the hands of others.

Take along with all these peculiarities, and as one of the concurrent parts of the general illustration they afford, the historical fact, now fully established and admitted, that the climate of Africa is so fatal to the white man, with scarcely the exception of any locality, that he can never make that continent the permanent place of his residence, or his labours. Whatever, therefore, is done for the moral improvement of it and of its one hundred and sixty millions of heathen, must be done by the black man himself. It results that this whole continent, with her teeming savage offspring, is shut up, inexorably shut up, to the dread alternative of receiving her help from sons of her own, or of remaining without it for ever. And here, in this alternative,—in this last necessity of leaving Africa to her deep and solitary woe, or of confiding the high mission of her deliverance to such of her own children as must elsewhere be fitted and prepared to undertake it, we may discover a not improbable solution of the whole problem of negro slavery with us. In this necessity, we see, most probably, why it is that the identity of his race has been so wonderfully protected—protected under natural laws, which rendered it impossible for him to incorporate with us, and impossible for him, therefore, to disappear from amongst us as a caste. Here, too, we have the reason of his extraordinary capacity to possess himself of all the common knowledge and common arts of his master. Here, too, the reason of his presence with *us*, where the habits of private intercourse are free, the rudiments of common learning more universal, and the sentiment of human liberty and equality, despite the exception in his own case, more intense and over-

mastering than anywhere else. And here, too, may be the reason of his personal, rather than his national bondage, that thus he might be chained down hand and foot to the spot of his trials and training, and kept there until all things were ready for his deliverance and departure.

Whatever the extraordinary interior characteristics of this institution, as developed, really and truly foreshadow, they are such in their plainest aspect, unquestionably, as to make the institution eminently hopeful of great things to Africa, and thus to surround it, and those who cherish it, with strongest motives to forbearance ; with strongest admonitions against rash and passionate intermeddling ; with new and powerful reasons for taking it entirely from the field of political agitation, and of dropping it, instantly and for ever, as a ground of sectional contest or rebuke.

Consider this system in any light that you may,—consider it as the crushed and distorted, but still the living and embryo principle, through which the liberty of the gospel, and the liberty of this free government, are yet to be conferred upon masses of men, now barbarous and benighted ; the mysterious and providential means by which the sufferings of Africans upon this continent are to be converted into the uplifting of their own, and the superstition, and cannibalism, and tears of its sunken millions to be wiped away ;—consider it thus, or only in its lowest aspect, as a mere institution of domestic labour, sanctioned by some particular States ;—be the light in which you regard it what it may, the one rational, authoritative, universal injunction of wisdom, and duty, and safety concerning it is,—*let it alone*.

If it be in reality, as we may well hope it is, the great seminal principle of a yet to be recovered and redeemed continent of people, let it rest with the Power that planted to mature and perfect it, confident that it will be done with unerring justice, and that the door for man's agency in it, if ever needed, will be clearly and widely thrown open. But if it be no more than a naked system of civil rights, then, too, and especially, let it alone; leave it, with every accountability it may impose, every remedy it may require, every accumulation of difficulty or of pressure it may react, to the wisdom, the interest, and the conscience of those upon whom the providence of God, and the constitution of country have cast it.

If, in this whole matter, you look exclusively, or look principally, to the personal interest of the slave, that interest cries back to you with emphatic entreaty to spare it,—imploring you, in the name of mercy and for mercy's sake, to commit against it the wrong of no farther interference. Be assured, in all soberness and truth, that all interference with this institution, whatever the form of it, is as pernicious to the private welfare of the slave, as it is perilous to the security of the republic. Nothing but aggravation and bitterness of heart and lot have come upon the poor slave from the misguided efforts that have been put forth to relieve him. They have (strangely, as you may think) broken down the footing he had reached, crushed the sympathies he had won, embarrassed and accursed the whole fortunes they were interposed to control. The generous and elevating influence of our free institutions was relaxing his bondage, bettering his condition, lifting up his character, turning upon him the

public anxieties and public counsels, as a suitable object of public provision, and changing, at all points, the aspects of his fate, when the same spirit of mad philanthropy which has since shaken this whole Union to its centre, came to scourge him with a demon visitation ; to wrench him from the arms of his only true and only capable benefactors, to throw him back again upon the earth, a thousand times more suspected, more separate and forlorn than ever ; riveting upon him every claim it would loosen, poisoning every blessing it would bestow, and filling his whole case with such elements of explosion, mischief, and evil, that the heart shudders, whilst it weeps, to look upon it.

But impressive, exciting, and almost absorbing, as *this* is, there is *another* interest, reaching infinitely above, and expanding infinitely around it : the embodied, inexpressible, and undying interest of our *whole country now and for ever*. And this interest, too, in all its vastness, and with its ten thousand tongues, calls upon you to beware, and be wise ; to put away this fratricidal subject from among you, whose chafings, and passions, and dangers, and jealousies cannot be revived ; or, if revived, and pressed again into farther quarrel, can bring to us nothing but despair, disunion, and national death.

This is the one only subject, as we all know, out of the millions that enter into our public polity, that has the power to command, and does command peremptorily, every passion and pulse of the national heart ; the only one upon which we are sectionally divided, and therefore, in these controlling and overmastering qualities, the solitary one, judging after man's judgment, upon which it is possible that our *Union* can be

wrecked. Whoever, then, deliberately undertakes to rouse it up, and exasperate afresh the morbid but soothed condition of the national feeling upon this subject (and so, as a consequence, to impel it on in the course of unknown and irrestrainable excess), whoever does this, deliberately undertakes, in effect, the dissemination of civil war, and the horrible and bloody extinction of his country. Whoever does this,—whatever his pretence, whatever his locality, whether north of the Potomac or south of it, he is, to all intents and purposes, in his action and up to his ability, a *dis-unionist*,—a plotter of mischief,—an aider and abettor for the overthrow of his country. And such a country!—the praise and the glory of the whole earth—to be recklessly and madly put into peril by the folly or the wickedness of her own protected and happy children!

Never before has it fallen to the lot of any other people to be possessed of so rich an aggregate of political capabilities, so responsibly and so providentially wrought up, for immense and beneficent action upon the well-being of universal man. From the empire of Nebuchadnezzar to that of Napoleon, how great the distance, how stupendous the revolutions, how intense the fiery contests, which have blazed and crackled over continents and ages, changing their instruments and their theatre as they swept along, and leaving upon the whole surface of the globe scarce a spot unstained by their desolating and bloody track; and yet, no national offspring has ever sprung from them all, so fitted as our own beloved land, to redeem for the world the agonies they have cost it. Throughout this long, long period, with only here and there a brilliant and

inspiring exception, the governments of every age and clime have been nothing but cruel and indefinite modifications of the principle of force—the free will of the people being, in them all, the one accursed, incarnate evil to be extinguished, and the unlimited power of the rulers, the one rightful, necessary, and even divine instrument by which to accomplish it. Hence, by a monstrous and horribly impious inversion of the whole purpose of civil authority, the machine is supreme, the living builders of it, subordinate,—the government, a pyramid, but man, thinking, acting, feeling, ethereal, and undying man, the wretched and miserable mummy within it. Here, thank Heaven, we have long been instructed in the great opposite truth,—that government was made for man, and not man for the government; and, framing and shaping all things to this, we have enthroned the *worker over his work*; we have committed all that we have, and all that we are, with free and confiding heart, to the very principle so rejected and despised of others, and are, not only now reaping, as the consequence, every blessing which human nature can enjoy, and human government secure, but are presenting to the world the unparalleled exhibition of a country where the utmost freedom of the citizen, and the utmost authority of the State are the co-existing and upholding conditions of one another.

And now that this unequalled country, with all its blessings of freedom, and happiness, and power is ours,—the peerless and priceless heritage of ourselves, and of our children,—who that has an American heart in his bosom, that does not feel it to be amongst the proudest of his privileges, and holiest of his public

duties to rally around and to defend it, and especially, and above all, from that suicidal spirit of section, which has already harassed us, and which is the only enemy upon this wide earth that has the slightest power to endanger or to overthrow it? If there are any, ready and willing to conquer and put down the enemy that would conquer and put down it, let them come up, from every city and hamlet in the land, to the side and the support of Congress;—let them stand by the solemn adjustment in this very behalf which that body has made, and carry it out faithfully and fully in all of its parts. Make this adjustment your own by ratification and actual fulfilment. Give your hearts to it boldly and freely, and let the world understand that, come what may, you are resolved to maintain it; resolved to maintain, with unbroken faith to your political associates everywhere, the pledges and covenants of the Constitution, and thereby maintain, in all its primitive integrity, the Union itself.

Do this here. Do it everywhere else in your Northern States. Give the whole energy of the popular heart to the fulfilling of this great measure of conciliation and of peace, and our glorious country is safe—for ever safe. Without a sorrow in her spirit, without a tremor upon her limb, without the beginning of decay within her, with the dew of youth and health fresh and undried upon her cheek, she will go on her pathway of immortality, carrying out to its brightest consummation the illustrious career she has begun. The poor devotee of freedom in the dim and dusky atmosphere of other lands, will still leap from his pallet of straw at the mention of her name, and shout and joy that she is safe. She will still tower up, as

before, a "city set upon a hill," shedding forth her light for the hope and the healing of nations. Her master spirit will be strong as ever in bringing the whole world into communion with itself; rousing up its millions, and bearing all things onward by the resistless energy and might of its own profound impulsion. Her bold and free heart will still glow with the hope of renovating the governments and the people of the earth, and beat and burn under the inspiring belief, that whilst it was the destiny of Greece to give her civilization, and of Rome to give her letters, hers will be the loftier and holier one still—to give her *liberty* to the world!

ADDRESS

AT THE LAYING OF THE CORNER-STONE OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN
SOUTHWARK, PHILADELPHIA, SEPTEMBER 17TH, 1849, BY THE REV. ARCHIBALD
ALEXANDER, D.D.

CHRISTIAN FRIENDS—You are convened on a very interesting occasion. You are met here, not to transact any secular business, but to lay the foundation of a house to be dedicated to the worship of the living God—your Almighty Creator, kind Preserver, and Benefactor, and most gracious Redeemer. The eye of the Omniscient Jehovah looks with favour on such an enterprise, because it is intended to promote his own glory and the salvation of men, in which he delighteth. If public worship be a duty, which all Christians admit, then there must be a place in which the people may assemble; and a house consecrated to the worship of God should be decent and commodious, and we ought not to desire to serve God with that which costs us nothing. We may be parsimonious in what relates to personal accommodation and self-indulgence; but in what regards the service of God, we should be liberal. David said, “Neither will I offer burnt-offerings unto the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing.” And all the immense wealth which this devout king acquired in a long reign, and in many successful wars, he dedicated to the service of God, for the erection of the temple. And when the people as well as himself, had a heart to give willingly for this object, he considered it a matter of special thanksgiving; although it was but returning to the Lord what properly belonged to him. “Now, therefore, our God, we thank thee and praise thy glorious name. But who am I, and what is my people, that

should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? For all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee." After the return of Israel from their Babylonish captivity, they were severely reprov'd for their negligence in rebuilding the temple of the Lord. Some said, "The time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built." And what answer did the Lord return to this, by his prophet Haggai? "Is it a time for you, O ye, to dwell in ceiled houses, and this house lie waste?" And for this neglect, the bounties of God's providence were, in a great measure, withholden from them. Their agricultural labour was unproductive, "They sowed much and brought in little." And so it will ever be. If we neglect our duty in regard to his worship, or are niggardly in making suitable provision for it, He will manifest his displeasure by withholding his favours, or by sending upon us his righteous judgments. The exhortation of God to the people, then, we may apply to ourselves, "Consider your ways." "Go up to the mountains and bring wood, and build the house, and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the Lord."

I said that the founding a church, or a house for the worship of God, was an interesting transaction; and I now will show why.

In the first place, it is, as it were, bringing God to dwell among you and to bless you. We all know, that Jehovah dwelleth not in temples made hands. And as Solomon said in his prayer at the dedication of the temple, "But will God, indeed, dwell on the earth. Behold the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee, how much less this house that I have builded." God is not confined to any place; no, not even to the highest heavens; yet he does condescend to take up his abode in particular places. For, after Solomon had ended his prayer, the glory of the Lord filled the house, and resided there in the inmost, or MOST HOLY PLACE; which glorious presence, or in-dwelling, the Jews called SCHECHINA. This was a miraculous manifestation; and we look for nothing of the kind now; but there is a presence, or *in-dwelling*, a

spiritual Schechina, which is still more glorious and more beneficial; and this is in his Church, in all ages. "Wherever two or three are gathered together in my name," says Christ, "I am in the midst of them." Certainly, then, where a church of true believers meet for his worship, there is He, their Head. The most important society in the world is the Church, and it is a high privilege to have a branch of it established in our midst, to which we and our children can have free access. For wherever there is a Church of Christ, there Christ will be present; and he never comes to any place without bringing a blessing with Him. "*In all places where I record my name, I will come unto them, and I will bless them.*" This is a promise of a general nature, not confined to any one time or dispensation. Wherever, then, a church is organized, and a house of prayer erected, there the name of God is recorded, and his promise sure. He will come and bless the people who assemble there for his worship, and to hear his holy word. No greater blessing has God given to men than the GLORIOUS GOSPEL of his grace. Wherever it comes, it sheds light on all around. It holds forth CHRIST, who is the Sun of Righteousness, the light of the world. The beams of divine truth, when they shine into any place, disperse the mists of ignorance, error, and prejudice; and if the natural light is sweet, and pleasant to our eyes, how much more the light of divine truth? How happy are they who know the Lord, and are illumined with the rays of spiritual light?

The Gospel is, moreover, a healing medicine for the diseased souls of men. It is an effectual remedy for maladies incurable by any other means. It is "*the balm of Gilead,*" and Christ is the great Physician, who has procured the remedy, and knows how to apply it. Suppose your families were down with some fatal disease which baffled all the skill of physicians, and one should come among you who possessed a sovereign remedy, which no other knew or could administer, how would the dwelling of such a physician be surrounded! and from morning to evening applicants would throng around him. Well, spiritual health is more important than bodily;

and men are all deeply diseased with the mortal leprosy of sin, though many are insensible of their miserable condition. How desirable to have a dispensary in your midst, where all may come and be gratuitously supplied with medicine, which will heal their souls! Such a dispensary will be a gospel Church in the midst of you.

But more, the gospel is *the word of life*. It is the voice of God for raising the dead. Men, by nature, are not merely sick, but dead—"dead in trespasses and sins;" but the word attended by the power of the Spirit, which always accompanies it, communicates spiritual life to the dead. It inspires men with new principles of action—not selfish, and sordid, and carnal; but holy, benevolent, and useful. They actually become, under the influence of the gospel, "*new creatures*;" "*old things are passed away, behold all things are become new.*" No other means has ever produced a thorough reformation of heart and life. The gospel is also the harbinger of peace. It is the "word of reconciliation." By it the breach between God and the sinner is made up; "*Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.*" It brings peace to the troubled conscience, and harmonizes the discordant passions of the soul. And it produces peace among men, just so far as it is embraced and obeyed. It removes those malignant passions, which are the sources of strife of every kind. "Whence come wars and fightings, but from your lusts?" Eradicate or subdue these evil passions, and the peace of society is secured. What is the proper remedy for those evils which have so frequently disturbed the peace of society in this great city, the very name of which should put men in mind of the duty of loving one another? The conservative politician says, "We want a faithful, vigilant, and strong police." Very good; but this can only *restrain* the evil—we want a remedy that will *eradicate* it—which will correct the evils of the *heart*—which will inspire men with goodwill to one another, and cause them to live in the fear of God. If you want good order, peace, the pleasures of friendship, and good society, introduce the gospel; and let its sacred

truths be impressed on the minds of the rising generation. Let children early receive lessons from the sacred Scriptures. Let them hear these truths from their parents and from their Sunday-school teachers. Our safety as a nation depends upon the right education of our children ; and I know of no good system of education, which is not based on the truths of the gospel. You have already the blessed institution of the Sabbath-school among you ; gather into it all the youth who are running wild on the Sabbath, and, if needful, set up "ragged schools," where the very offscouring of our race may be collected and instructed. *

My Christian friends, you are mostly strangers to me ; but once I was well acquainted with Southwark, and all its streets and lanes. I considered it as part of my charge ; for many of my parishioners inhabited this district. The church which I served, had more members here than all others put together. Forty years ago, much prayer was offered up for Southwark. During the whole period of my ministry, we kept up a prayer-meeting, in this district, at the house of two pious widows. That prayer-meeting was attended by many, and there was more appearance of the presence of God in it, than in any of our other meetings. The pious of other denominations frequently met with us there, and united their prayers with ours. Excuse me, if I mention the names of some who delighted to attend in that retired spot. *Joseph Eastburn*, though residing far away, was often in our midst, with his warm heart, affectionate voice, and tearful eye. There he poured out his feeling heart in many a fervent prayer and earnest exhortation. The case of the neglected seamen had not then engaged his attention. And I must mention two of the elders of the Pine Street church, of which I was pastor, *John McMullin* and *James Stuart*. If they were ever absent, it was from sickness or some providential hindrance. *Stuart*, I understand, has recently been called home. He was, indeed, a man of fervent spirit—more earnest and affecting prayers than his, I never heard. And *John McMullin*, of Front Street, was certainly, in temper, in conversation, in his whole behaviour, toward God

and man, one of the most consistent, perfect Christians with whom I have ever been acquainted. Weekly, these men, with others, offered up their earnest prayers in this district, and for its inhabitants, which, I trust, are now about to be answered more fully than before.

We had connected with our church a company of poor widows, who were supported by the alms of the church. These pious women were mostly inhabitants of Southwark. I used to think, that those poor women, instead of being a burden, were a treasure to the church; for they prayed day and night for her prosperity. Guided by the faithful elders above-mentioned, I sometimes visited them in their garrets or cellars; and these visits were always edifying to me. One afflicted Scotch widow, who lived in a poor garret, I particularly remember. Her soul appeared to be alive to God. The prayers of the Lord's poor are powerful; and no doubt some of them remain to be answered, in behalf of the inhabitants of this place.

Finally, I would say, Arise and build. Let every man, woman, and child do something to help forward the house of the Lord. And to whomsoever the missionary applies for aid, for Christ's sake, let him not be sent empty away. It is for the Lord's house that he solicits. And when such an enterprise is on foot, so necessary to supply the spiritual wants of a destitute district, let all Presbyterians in the city of Philadelphia feel it to be not only a duty, but a privilege, to lend their aid. Let them desire to have at least a nail in the house of God about to be erected. Let them rest assured, that, in the end, they will be no losers by contributing to such an object.

Dear friends, when the missionary of Southwark applies to you for aid in erecting this church, send him not empty away. According to your ability, and according as God has blessed you, give—give liberally—give cheerfully, and the Lord will reward you with blessings a hundred-fold more valuable.





